

# LETTER

From a Gentleman of the Church of England, to all the HIGH-FLYERS of Great-Britain.

Gentlemen,

A S no English Man can think of the late Tumults, and present Rebellion, without a suitable Concern for the impending Miseries of his native Country; so no true Son of the Church can reflect on the unhappy Share You have in both, but his Heart must bleed within him at the Dishonour thereby brought on the Church of England. We blush at the Charge, but alas! we cannot refute it, That all the Miseries the Nation feels or fears, are chiefly owing to Your Inconstancy, without which, the united Forces of Hell and Rome, could never have brought us into the unhappy Circumstances, the Fire of our Civil War kindled in our Bowels, perdition to be extinguish'd but with a Sea of Blood?

Blood ? The unchristian Animosities between Protestants and Brethren of the same Church and the undutiful Behaviour of some (who call themselves Church-Men) to His Sacred Majesty King *GEO RGE*, may be said, with too much Truth, to owe their Rise to that religious Wild Fire *You* have scattered all the Nation over, and those disloyal Suggestions which have dropt from your Pulpits, which, instead of being sacred Truth and Peace, have been Engines of Division.

By this Behaviour *You* have opened the Mouth of the Church's Enemies against her, and strip her of the Glory she once boasted of, of being *Loyal without Bounds, and Obedient without Reserve*. Your untemper'd Zeal has provok'd Men not to *Love, and good Works*, but to Envy, Hatred, Riots and Tumults, and the sacred Name of *Church*, has been prostituted as a Watch-word for Faction and Rebellion. Others may pretend to be the Church's Pillars, but none can dispute with you, the Honour of being her *Brazen Trumpets*, nor can it be said of you, that you have given an uncertain Sound, since 'tis plain, your Votaries understood it a Charge, and have accordingly prepared themselves for Battle. The Dissenters of *England* have felt the first Shock of their Fury, their Persons have been insulted, and their Places for Religious Worship laid in Ashes by that irreligious Zeal *You* have kindled in your Hearers, which destroys all before it; nor is it to be wondered at, after you have unchristian'd the

that no Regard should be had to any thing Civil or Religious that belongs unto them. Never was Schism attack'd in such a Manner before, our Forefathers dealt with them as Men, and endeavour'd by dint of Reason to convince their Judgments, but had they been acquainted with our Modern Arguments, what Reams of Paper might have been saved from *Ecclesiastical Polity*, *Friendly Debate*, *Mischiefs of Separation*, and the like? Tis to you we owe the New Method of Conviction, those *Knock-down Arguments*, which carry with them their own Weight, and may truly be call'd, *Argumenta ad Hominem*. By the help of these a Butcher dispatches a Schismatick with the same Ease as he kills his Calf, and a Son of the Church who can *neither Read nor Write*, is a Match for the greatest *Rabbi* of them all, who finds himself under a Necessity of becoming the Church's Convert or Victim.

But now Sirs, let me ask you, What End is serv'd by this Behaviour towardsthem? Is it likely to profelyte one Soul to the Church? Or rather does it not tend directly to confirm them in their *Dissent*, and strengthen their Prejudices against it? Is it likely we should convince Men of our Concern for their Happiness in another World, by robbing them of what is dearest to them as Men and Christians, in this? Will they believe you intend to bring them into that Church which enjoynsher Members to *Love their Neighbours as themselves, to do unto all Men as we would they should do to us, to Honour and Obey the King*

and his Ministers, to submit our selves to all our  
 Governours, to hurt no Body by Word or Deed, to  
 bear no Malice nor Hatred in our Hearts, to keep  
 our Tongue from evil Speaking, Lying and Sla-  
 dering; I say, can they ever believe you would  
 bring them into such a Church as this, when they  
 set its Members into open Rebellion against their  
 Prince, and guilty of the most injurious Treat-  
 ment of their Fellow-Subjects, who differ from  
 them? Nay, when they see an exemplary Life, a  
 strict Conformity to the Church's Rites, and a  
 constant Attendance on her Worship, if joyn'd  
 with an Attachment to His Majesty's Interest,  
 cannot secure a Man the Title of a Church Man,  
 but he is branded with the Name of Whig, Re-  
 publican, Low-Church-Man, and such like Terms  
 of Reproach, whilst the *Debauche*, the *Traytor*,  
 the *Perjur'd prophane Wretch*, who in the same  
 Breath blasphemeth his God and his Prince, passes  
 for a *true Son of the Church*, and uses that sacred  
 Name as a Charm to defend him in the vilest En-  
 ormities against God and Man? Gentlemen, Are  
 not these Things likely to encrease the Number  
 of Dissenters, by giving Offence to all Men of  
 Piety or Virtue amongst us? Or can they make  
 any Proselytes, but such as are a Scandal to the  
 Christian Name? For my part, as zealous a  
 Church-Man as I am, were I to frame my Opin-  
 ion of the Church, from the Practice of some  
 amongst us, I should renounce her Communion  
 to Morrow, and live and die a Protestant Dis-  
 tener; for if these Things are avowed, that pro-

phane

ane Proverb seems verified; *The nearer the  
church, the farther from God.*

Again; What Reason can be assign'd for the  
unchristian Treatment of Dissenters, from  
our Pulpits and else where? Have they offended  
against the Church or State? The Law is  
open, and the Remedy easy. Some of You indeed  
told us in the last Reign, *That the Dissenters  
would bring in the Pretender*, and others with  
equal Modesty in *This* that *They burnt their own  
Meeting Houses*. But as the Protestant Succession  
was the Subject of their Prayers and Wishes,  
and undissembled Joy appears in their Countenances,  
now they see it take Place, (and with Shame  
and Grief I speak it) the cloudy Brows are seen  
amongst those who make the greatest Pretences to  
royalty; I wish it were no more than Suspicion,  
that all the Insults that People have suffered, are  
owing to their steady Adherence to his Majesty's  
Interest; this however is an HONOUR due to  
them, *That amongst so numerous a Body, we don't  
hear of one Jacobite, or disaffected Person.* If  
we consider their Behaviour since the Revolution  
has been peaceable and submissive, and may  
fully shame some Members of our Church. We  
find none of them among the Assassins of King  
William, or concerned in the Invasion in Queen  
Anne's Reign, nor amongst the numerous Conspirators  
against his present Majesty, and would  
God the same could be affirm'd and with equal  
Truth, of all who call themselves *Members of our  
church*, some of whom, to the Scandal of that  
Name,

Name, have been deeply concern'd in them all, Has what has been done at Oxford, been transacted in a Dissenter's Academy, our Pulpits had rung of their Disloyalty, and every one had condemn'd them as unworthy of Protection, who had so impudently flown in the Face of Majesty; and yet the Aggravation had been unequal, since the one subsists by Royal Bounty, the other maintain'd by private Expence. Gentlemen, If you have any REGARD for the Honour and Safety of our holy Mother, if any CONCERN for the Peace and Welfare of the Nation, I beseech you bethink your selves of the unhappy ConSEQUENCES of Your past CONDUCT, and endeavour to retrieve your Character by your future BEHAVIOUR; let the Church be no longer the Cant, when *Rebellion* is the Design, let no more undutiful SUGGESTIONS drop from the Pulpit to alienate the MINDS of your Hearers from the best of Kings, but tell them their Happiness under his Majesty's GOVERNMENT, and that Duty and Obedience the owe to him. 'Tis not many Years, since *Passive Obedience* was a Duty of that high OblIGATION that not the different Religions of a Prince, nor his Oppression or Tyranny could supersede it; nay, it could not be dispensed with for the Salvation of a Soul, no nor for the Soul of the whole World; and is it now of so little Moment, that it may be violated to save a few Rogues from the Gallows? cannot the Justices of the Nation take place on those *Parricides* who have injur'd and betray'd it, but the Church must interpose in their behalf, and become Partakers of their Wha  
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their Guilt, by making their Quarrel her own? What if Butler, Mar, Bolingbroke, and Twenty Traytors more were hang'd to Morrow, as they deserve? For God's sake, how is the Church's Safety, or her Immunities, affected by it? shall it ever be said, she needs such Pillars to support her? Let the Church of *Rome* make her Altars a Sanduray, for Homicide, but let it never be said of that Church whom you your selves reckon the best Church in the World, that she is become a Refuge for Rebels and Traytors; she ought to give these Men up, as Bastards and not Sons; the Mask is now throw off, and their Designs appear in a glaring Light, we see them in open Rebellion, and such a Rebellion as in all it's Circumstances our Histories cannot parallel: With what Face can we object Disloyalty to Dissenters, or twit them with 41? Will they not presently retort upon us 1715? The War of 41 was begun by a House of Lords and Commons, and Violation of Laws, and Oppression of the Subject were alledged as a Reason for it, and no wonder if Men embark'd in a Cause which they thought had so good a Sanction; but here's a Rebellion without the least Pretence of Male-Administration, and in a most impudent defiance to King, Lords and Commons united: The former had the keeping out of Popery for one of its Pretences, This has no other Pretence in the World, but the bringing it in.

The *Danger of the Church* has been the great Cry amongst You, all over the Nation, and Thousands

lands of well meaning People have been delu-  
by this ; But can any of you say from w-  
Quarter that Danger proceeds ? Is it from  
King ? Unmannerly Suggestion ! You have  
solemn Oath and Promise to protect it, and  
His Majesty any more for your Allegiance ? Is  
from the Ministry ? Show me a Man amon-  
them, who is not of her Communion ? But y  
do not like the Persons : What then ? Is it not  
indisputable Prerogative of the Crown to chur-  
ches own Servants ; or is that which was Gosp  
Four Years ago *Apocrypha* now ? Is the Church  
endangered by the Dismission of a Set of Men  
who when in Place, were *Secret Traytors*, and  
now they are out, are *Open Rebels* against the  
King and Country ? No, no Gentlemen, If I have  
any Skill, the greatest Danger of the Church  
from within, nor can any Thing so effectually  
ruin Her, as the Prevalency of that High  
Church Principle, That solemn Oaths may be  
broke thro' at Pleasure, and when ever this comes  
to be the Case, I think we may say, *Lord have*  
*Mercy upon us.*

I am, &c.

**F. I. N. I : S.**

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